NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION

Information Letter

FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

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New Western Laboratory Formally Opened

The new laboratory of the National Canners Association in San Francisco was formally opened on Tuesday, October 12, with appropriate exercises and the building and its equipment were inspected by a large number of visitors.

The land, building, and equipment represent a cost of over $100,000, and are a gift to the National Canners Association, in fee simple, without restrictions of any kind, by the American Can Company, through H. W. Phelps, President, New York City.

With this laboratory in operation, the National Canners Association now has two great laboratories, one in the East in Washington and the other in the West at San Francisco, with a third at Seattle devoted chiefly to salmon research.

The new laboratory is a three-story and basement structure, fronting 30 feet on Battery Street and 70 feet on Commercial Street. In the basement are the power plant and hot water heater, air compressor and vacuum equipment, and dark rooms for photographic purposes. On the first floor is an experimental canning room completely equipped with the necessary machinery and apparatus. On the second floor are two chemical laboratories, also a large conference room and the library. The third floor is devoted to bacteriological work.

The new western laboratory will serve the canners of the Inter-Mountain States, the Pacific Coast, and the Hawaiian Islands. Mr. B. S. Clark who, for eleven years, has been with the American Can Company in a technical capacity, will be the Director of the Association Laboratory and associated with him will be Dr. G. S. Bohart, who has for some years been with the National Canners Association at Washington. Dr. E. S. Cornell has been appointed technical assistant to Director Clark and other members will be assigned to the staff as may be found necessary.

Operating independently, but using the same facilities and functioning in cooperation with the same committees, the University of California under the direction of Dr. Karl F. Meyer has taken over the bacteriological work in the laboratory, particularly botulinus investigations, thus giving this part of the activities a national and international standing and responsibility impossible in any commercial laboratory, no matter how high its character. Dr. Meyer is known to the whole industry through his work on botulinus at the Hooper Foundation. He is a bacteriologist of international reputation and standing, and is also technical advisor to the California State Board of Health. Research work covering the processing orders of the California State Board of Health will be handled by this University Laboratory and the same facilities will be available for Boards of Health of other Western States if desired.

On Dr. Meyer's staff is Dr. J. R. Esty, who, like Dr. Bohart, is from the Washington Laboratory, but for the last three years has spent most of his time on work in California and is well known to the canners of the Coast. O. W. Lang, who has worked under Dr. Meyer for two years, will come to the new laboratory, assigned to fish investigation.

Through the State Fish Commission, the fish canners of California are contributing $15,000 for special investigation work in the laboratory, which work will be handled separately from the general bacteriological work in the laboratory, although it will be under the direction of the University through Dr. Meyer and his assistants.

Argentine Canned Food Regulation Slightly Modified

A slight modification has been made in the Argentine decree governing the packing and labeling of canned food products, according to a cable received by the Department of Commerce.

It is reported that Article 5 of this decree which requires that the inside of containers in which food products of an acid reaction are packed should be lacquered, and which had been suspended until November 10, 1926, has been modified in such a way as to increase the acidity tolerance about three times that formerly allowed, basing the determination of acidity on titration of the liquid in the can.

Specifically a titration method is to be used in the determination of acidity instead of one involving measurement of the hydrogen ion concentration. The amended regulation provides that not more than six cubic centimeters of normal sodium hy-

droxide should be required to neutralize 100 grams of the liquid in the cans, using phenolphthalein. If more than this amount of alkali is found, lacquered tins must be used as containers.

Even under this modified regulation most canned fruits and many other canned foods will have to be packed in lacquer lined cans if shipped to Argentina. It is understood that further changes in this law are very unlikely, but this Association plans to make further efforts, through the proper channels, to get this ruling further modified or revoked.

Condensed-Milk Manufacturing Monopoly in Costa Rica

The American consul at San Jose reports that a contract conceding a monopoly for the manufacture of condensed, pulverized, evaporated, and malted milk in Costa Rica, approved and effective August 19, 1926, grants exemption from import duties for machinery for the condensing plants and machinery and material for the manufacture of containers, as well as for the material and instruments for the chemical analytic laboratories to be annexed to the condensing plants. The Government further agrees to exempt the condensed, pulverized, evaporated, and malted milk produced in the factories from all export duties, and national, industrial, municipal, or other taxes.

Bids Asked on Canned Tomatoes

The Navy Department is advertising for bids on canned tomatoes, bids to be opened on November 2d, 120,000 pounds for delivery at Boston, 250,000 pounds at Brooklyn, 550,000 pounds at Hampton Roads, 200,000 pounds at Mare Island, and 500,000 pounds at Puget Sound. Copies of schedule 6101 on which to submit bids may be obtained from the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

Federal Food Specifications

The Federal Specifications Board has prepared specifications for articles to be purchased by the government, including a number of canned foods. The food specifications, it is understood, were prepared by a committee representing the Army, the Navy, and the Marine Corps, with the assistance of advisory members from other departments of the government. These specifications are not absolutely final, but are subject to revision or review upon proper appeal to the Board. Copies of any of the specifications can be secured by addressing the Federal Specifications Board, Bureau of Standards, Washington, D. C.

The following list gives the number of the specifications for canned and other foods. Those marked with an asterisk (*)

are binding upon the Army, the Navy, and the Marine Corps, but are optional with other government departments:

No. 73. Edible cottonseed oil.
No. 77. Edible olive oil.
No. 161. Coffee, tea and cocoa.
No. *270. Fresh, canned and dried fruits and fruit products. (Including canned apples, apricots, cherries, peaches, berries, pineapple, prunes, applebutter, apple sauce, jams, jellies, marmalade and preserves).
No. *271. Fresh, canned and dried vegetables. (Including canned asparagus, string beans, beets, corn, peas, sauerkraut, pumpkin, spinach, and tomatoes).
No. *267. Meat and meat food products. (Including canned corned beef, dried beef, beef, tongue and Vienna sausage).
No. *315. Sugar and sugar products.
No. *317. Cereals and cereal products. (Including canned hominy).
No. *364. Condiments. (Including catsup and chili sauce)
No. *365. Fresh, salt, smoked and canned sea food. (Including canned sardines, salmon and tuna).
No. *381. Dairy products. (Including evaporated and condensed milk).
No. *389. Miscellaneous provisions. (Including canned beans, with and without pork).

Urges Canadian Merchants to Participate in Canned Foods Week

In the Canadian "Maritime Merchant" for September 23 attention is called to the Canned Foods Week from November 10 to 20, and merchants are advised to prepare themselves for the event by working up interest among their customers. This year's Canned Foods Week is apparently receiving more attention in Canada than any previous campaign.

Tomato Canning Costs in Italy

In Information Letter No. 180 there was published a report from the American consul at Naples on the cost of packing Italian tomatoes. The report as issued by the Department of Commerce contained an error, to which the Department calls attention in a recent statement. As published, the report stated that workers are paid 40 cents a dozen cans. This figure should have been 2 cents a dozen cans. As the daily output per worker is about 20 dozen cans, the total daily wage averages 40 cents.

British Fruit Canning

The American consul at London states that the first fruit-canning plant to be installed in England is packing home-grown plums into British-made cans at the plant of the British Fruit Packing Company in East Farleigh. The plant has been installed by the Ministry of Agriculture in order to demonstrate the possibility of extending the canning industry.